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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/839,840	04/23/2001	Gary Alan Culliss		2049

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Patent Administrator  
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High Street Tower  
125 High Street  
Boston, MA 02110

EXAMINER

HOOSAIN, ALLAN

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2645

DATE MAILED: 05/03/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

## Office Action Summary

**Application No.**

09/839,840

**Applicant(s)**

CULLIS, GARY ALLAN

**Examiner**

Allan Hoosain

**Art Unit**

2645

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 01 December 2004.  
2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.  
3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3-15 and 17-20 is/are pending in the application.  
4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.  
5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.  
6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3-13,15 and 17-20 is/are rejected.  
7) ☒ Claim(s) 14 is/are objected to.  
8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.  
10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).  
11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).  
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:  
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.  
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.  
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).  
\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

### Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)  
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)  
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.  
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.  
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)  
6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_.

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## FINAL DETAILED ACTION

### *Allowable Subject Matter*

1. Claim 14 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

### *Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103*

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 1, 3-8, 10-13, 15 and 17-20 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over **Kelly** in view of **Cox et al.** (US 6,233,319).

As to Claims 1,15, with respect to Figures 6-9, **Kelly** teaches an answering machine detection method for a voice message delivery system comprising the steps of:

- (a) placing an outbound call to a telephone line of a Recipient (Figure 6, label 104);
- (b) detecting a telephone line pick-up (Figure 6, label 108);
- (d) playing a prompt (Figure 7, label 206);
- (e) determining, at a voice message server, that the telephone line pick-up was by an existing answering machine when talk-over occurs at the same time as at least a portion of the

Art Unit: 2645

playing of the prompt, the talk-over comprising voice energy coming from the telephone line of the Recipient (Col. 6, lines 36-40);

**Kelly** does not teach the following limitation:

“(c) performing echo cancellation on the outbound call”

However, it is obvious that **Kelly** suggests the limitation. This is because **Kelly** teaches specific detecting speech signals (Figure 7, label 224 and Col. 7, lines 29-33). **Cox** teaches using echo cancellers for reliable speech detection (Col. 3, lines 21-24). Since **Kelly** and **Cox** are in analogous message delivery art and identifies recipients or answering machines at the time the invention was made, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to add echo canceller capability to **Kelly**'s invention for reliably detecting speech as taught by **Cox**'s invention in order to provide message delivery services.

As to Claims 3,17, **Kelly** teaches the answering machine detection method of claim 1, further comprising:

(f) waiting for silence when the telephone line pick-up was by the existing answering machine (Figure 9, label 206);

(g) playing a first message when the telephone line pick-up was by the existing answering machine (Figure 7, label 210); and

(h) playing a second message when the telephone line pick-up was by a live Recipient (Figure 9, label 210).

Art Unit: 2645

As to Claims 4,18, **Kelly** teaches the answering machine detection method of claim 3, further comprising:

(i) detecting talk-over by the existing answering machine during the playing of the first message (Figure 7, label 210), and

(j) restarting the playing of the first message (Figure 7, label 224).

As to Claims 5,19, **Kelly** teaches the answering machine detection method of claim 3, wherein:

the first message is different from the second message (Col. 7, lines 28-33).

As to Claims 6,20, **Kelly** teaches the answering machine detection method of claim 3, further comprising:

(i) playing at least one interactive option when the telephone line pick-up was by the live Recipient (Figure 9).

As to Claim 7, **Kelly** teaches the answering machine detection method of claim 6, further comprising:

(j) playing at least one interactive reject option when the telephone line pick-up was by the live recipient (Figure 9).

As to Claim 8, **Kelly** teaches the answering machine detection method for a voice message delivery system comprising the steps of:

(a) placing an outbound call to a telephone line of a live Recipient (Figure 6, label 104);

Art Unit: 2645

(b) detecting a telephone line pick-up (Figure 6, label 108);

(d) playing a voice message that requests a touch-tone input from the telephone line of the Recipient (Col. 3, lines 58-64); and

(e) determining at a voice message server, that the telephone line pick-up was by a live Recipient when the requested touch-tone is received at the voice message server (Figures 7 and 9);

**Kelly** does not teach the following limitation:

“(c) performing echo cancellation on the outbound call”

However, it is obvious that **Kelly** suggests the limitation. This is because **Kelly** teaches specific detecting speech signals (Figure 7, label 224 and Col. 7, lines 29-33). **Cox** teaches using echo cancellers for reliable speech detection (Col. 3, lines 21-24). Since **Kelly** and **Cox** are in analogous message delivery art and identifies recipients or answering machines at the time the invention was made, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to add echo canceller capability to **Kelly**'s invention for reliably detecting speech as taught by **Cox**'s invention in order to provide message delivery services.

As to Claims 10-12, **Kelly, Jr.** teaches the answering machine detection method of claim 1, wherein the playing of the prompt occurs within one second of detecting the telephone line pick-up (Col. 6, lines 58-68).

As to Claim 13, **Kelly** teaches the answering machine detection method of claim 1, wherein the playing of the prompt introduces the outbound call to a live recipient (Figure 6, label 120).

4. Claim 9 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over **Kelly** in view of **Cox et al.** (US 6,233,319) and further in view of **Cox et al.** (US 6,396,920).

As to Claim 9, **Kelly** teaches the answering machine detection method for a voice message delivery system, comprising:

- (a) recording, by a Sender, a voice message intended for a Recipient;
- (b) placing an outbound call to a telephone line of the Recipient of the voice message;
- (c) detecting a telephone line pick-up;
- (e) requesting, by a voice message server, an input from the intended Recipient of the voice message; and
- (f) determining that the telephone line pick-up was by a person when the requested input is received from the intended Recipient of the voice message (Figures 7 and 9);

**Kelly** does not teach the following limitations:

“(d) performing echo cancellation on the outbound call” and “a specific speech input”

However, it is obvious that **Kelly** suggests the limitations. This is because **Kelly** teaches specific dial tone inputs and detecting speech (Figure 7, label 224 and Col. 7, lines 29-33). **Cox** ‘920 teaches detecting specific DTMF or speech inputs. **Cox** ‘319 teaches echo cancellation (Figure 3 and Col. 17, lines 11-30 and Col. 19, lines 45-46). Since **Kelly** and **Cox** are in analogous message delivery art and identifies recipients or answering machines at the time the invention was made, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to add specific speech input and echo cancellation capabilities to **Kelly**’s invention for offering option inputs

Art Unit: 2645

and reliable speech detection as taught by Cox's invention in order to provide message delivery services.

***Response to Arguments***

5. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1, 3-15,17-20 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection and the following:

Examiner respectfully invites Applicant to contact Examiner to discuss possible amendments for overcoming the prior art of record.

***Conclusion***

6. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Cox et al. (US 6,782,358) teach using echo cancellers in message delivery systems.

7. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event,



Art Unit: 2645

however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

8. Any response to this final action should be mailed to:

**Box AF**

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks  
Washington, D.C. 20231

**or faxed to:**

(703) 872-9314, (for formal communications; please mark "EXPEDITED  
PROCEDURE")

**Or:**

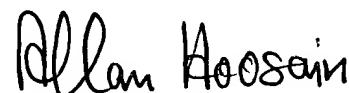
(703) 306-0377 (for customer service assistance)

Hand-delivered responses should be brought to Carlyle, Alexandria,  
VA 22313 (Receptionist).

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to **Allan Hoosain** whose telephone number is (571) 272-7543. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday to Friday from 8 am to 4:30 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, **Fan Tsang**, can be reached on (571) 272-7547.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (571) 272-2600.

  
**Allan Hoosain**  
**Primary Examiner**  
4/20/05